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DESCRIPTION  
CASE

TECHNICAL FIELD

This invention relates to a box-shaped case in which shells can be exchanged.

BACKGROUND ART

5 In a box-shaped case represented by an attaché-case, shells are fixed respectively to a pair of frame members pivotally connected together at their lower portions. Such a box-shaped case, even when pressed, can not be easily crushed, and therefore  
10 documents and the like can be stored in the case in a safe and secure manner.

However, the capacity (the thickness) of the box-shaped case can not be changed, and therefore the case is sometimes too large or too small, depending on  
15 the purpose for each occasion. There is known also a type of box-shaped case having a special partition provided therein so as to enable the case to store particular articles. Such a case with the partition has a drawback that articles of other shapes and sizes  
20 can not be easily stored in the case. Therefore, several cases need to be owned, and it is rather difficult to secure a place in which these cases are stored.

## DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

It is therefore the object of this invention to provide a case in which shells can be easily exchanged.

5           The case according to the present invention has a construction in which dish-like shells are releasably fitted respectively in a pair of frame members from inner sides thereof, the frame members being pivotally connected together at their lower  
10 portions so as to be opened and closed.

          Thus, the case according to the present invention has the construction in which the shells are releasably fitted in the frame members, and therefore there are prepared several kinds of shells of different  
15 thicknesses and colors and shells each having a partition, and by exchanging these shells, there can be obtained a case suited for a purpose unique to each occasion. Therefore, it is not necessary to own several cases, and a storage space is reduced.

20           The shells, removed from the frame members, can be used also as storage trays for storing articles. Further, when the shells used as storage trays are fitted in the frame members as they are, the articles, stored in the trays (shells), can be carried in the  
25 case, without the need for repacking.

          Preferably, it is constructed so that a peripheral edge portion of the shell is turned back outwardly into a U-shape, and a groove is formed in a

peripheral portion of the frame member, and the turned-back portion of the shell can be fitted in this groove. With this construction, the frame member, fitted on the shell, is not warped, and when the case is closed, the pair of frame members are neatly mated with each other without displacement.

Preferably, pits are formed in the inner surface of the shell, and are arranged at predetermined intervals, and projections, corresponding to these pits, are formed on a bottom of a partition, a small article-storing member or the like, and these projections are fitted in the pits, thereby fixing the partition. With this construction, articles can be neatly stored in the case, using the fixed partition.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is an exploded, perspective view of one preferred embodiment of a case according to the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a cross-sectional view showing a condition in which a frame member and a shell of the case of the embodiment in Fig. 1 are fitted together.

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of the case of the embodiment of Fig. 1 in its open condition.

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of the case of the embodiment of Fig. 1 in its closed condition.

Fig. 5 is a cross-sectional view of a portion of the shell, showing a condition in which a partition

for the case according to the present invention is to be attached.

#### BEST MODE FOR UTILIZING THE INVENTION

Fig. 1 shows one preferred embodiment of a case according to the present invention. As shown in the drawings, this embodiment is so constructed that a shell 11 can be releasably fitted in a frame member 10. The frame member 10 is molded into a rectangular shape, using a plastics material. The two frame members are pivotally connected together by hinge pins 12 so as to be opened and closed. A handle 13 is integrally molded on the frame member 10. Reference numeral 15 denotes a slide-type stopper for holding the pair of frame members 10 against opening.

The shell 11 is molded into a dish-like shape, using a plastic material, and is so sized as to snugly fit in the frame member 10. As shown in Fig. 2, a peripheral edge portion of the shell 11 is turned back outwardly into a U-shape (This turned-back portion is designated by reference numeral 16). On the other hand, a groove 17 is formed in a peripheral portion of the frame 11. When the shell 11 is fitted in the frame member 10, the turned-back portion 16 of the shell is snugly fitted in the groove 17 in this frame member as indicated in dot-and-dash lines in Fig. 2.

In order that the thus fitted shell 11 will not easily come off from the frame member 10, small

claws or projections 19 are formed on predetermined portions of the groove portion 17 in the frame member 10 while small claws or projections 19 are formed on predetermined portions of the turned-back portion 16 of the shell 11. When the shell 11 is fitted, the claws 19, provided at one of the two, slide past the corresponding mating claws 19. The claws 19 are engaged with each other, and therefore the thus fitted shell 11 will not be easily disengaged from this frame member 10. For removing the shell 11 from the frame member 10, the shell 11 is pressed hard inwardly from the outer side thereof. By doing so, the claw 19 slides past the mating claw 19, so that the shell 11 is disengaged.

Fig. 3 shows a condition in which the shell 11 is thus fitted in the frame member 10. Fig. 4 shows the case in its closed condition.

The shell 11, shown in the drawings, has a standard depth, and when it is desired to increase the thickness of the case, the standard shell is removed, and a shell (not shown), having a greater depth, is attached.

Pits 20 are formed in the inner surface of the shell 11 simultaneously when molding the shell 11, the pits 20 being arranged at predetermined intervals in lengthwise and widthwise directions. A partition plate, a small article-storing member or the like is attached, utilizing these pits 20. More specifically,

projections 21 are formed on a bottom of the partition plate (or the small article-storing member) 22 as shown in Fig. 5, and these projections are fitted in the pits 20, thereby achieving the fixing. An inlet portion of  
5 each pit 20 is formed narrowly so that the projection will not be easily disengaged from the pit.

#### INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITY

As described above, with the construction of the present invention, the shells of the case can be  
10 easily exchanged, and the case, having the thickness and color suited for the purpose for each occasion, can be used.

Although the present invention has been described with reference to its preferred embodiment,  
15 it can be appreciated that the present invention itself is not to be limited to the details thereof. It can be appreciated that the present invention include modifications, which are apparent to those versed in the art relating to the present invention, without  
20 departing from the scope and category of the present invention recited in the appended claims.